第8話 Those With Doors on Their Backs

摩訶不思議なる季節のおはなし。

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東方三月精

Visionary Fairies in Shrine.

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HMM...

IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SUMMER NOW...

YOU'RE RIGHT,

WITH ALL THESE OFF-SEASON CHERRY BLOSSOMS IN FULL BLOOM, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO SUMMER THIS YEAR?

TEE HEE

AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

WE CAN WATCH THE FLOWERS FOREVER!

I WISH IT WERE ALWAYS SPRING!

AND SHE'S GETTING ALL WEIRD ABOUT IT...

YEAH! WE NEED TO GET THINGS SUMMERY AGAIN...

FEELS BAD TO HAVE SOMEONE ELSE MESSING AROUND WITH IT.

ANYWAY, NATURE IS *FAIRY* TURF, ISN'T IT?

WITH OUR OWN HANDS!

Fairies are Investigating...

SUNBATHING

SHAVED ICE

PLAYING WITH WATER

OW OW OW...

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THROB

THROB

IT JUST DOESN'T WORK WHEN IT'S THIS CHILLY OUT...

My head...

STAR'S STILL INTO IT THOUGH, AS USUAL...

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

HUH?

?

WHAT'RE YOU THREE DOING?

And under the cherry blossoms

WHAT? IT'S SUMMER IN OTHER PLACES?

THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE.

HOW CAN THE WEATHER BE *THAT* DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF GENSOKYO?

THAT'S RIGHT.

IT'S ALL SPRINGY AT THE SHRINE, BUT IT'S MEGA-SUMMER IN THE GARDEN OF THE SUN. SO MUCH SUN.

WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

WHAT?

HMPH

HMM...

ARE YOU BLIND?!

C'MON!

WAIT...

IS YOUR SKIN DARKER?

WHOA!

SHE'S TANNED!

RIGHT!

THIS IS PROOF OF SUMMER!

ALRIGHT! SO IF YOU GET IT NOW,

THEN LET'S START OUR SUMMER TOUR!

YEAH!

WOW! NOW *THIS* IS SUMMER!

IT'S HOT!

I- IT'S...

IT'S FINALLY SUMMER!

WE'VE GOTTA MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME!

THAT'S FOR SURE!

SO WHY STAY COOPED UP IN THAT GLOOMY SHRINE?

RIGHT?

YEAH!

WHOEVER GETS THE COOLEST BUG WINS!

SO THIS IS A BUG CATCHING CONTEST!

ALRIGHT!

HMM...

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BUGS...

BUGS...

OH, I KNOW!

I'M A GENIUS!

HERE WE GO!

OKAY!

SUPER RARE!

TAKE THIS! A PURPLISH RED LOCUST!

COOL!

AN EXTRA-LARGE GIANT DRAGONFLY!

BUT NOT AS COOL AS MINE!

A DAYTIME FIREFLY!

THIS ONE'S KINDA COOL TOO, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT HOW HARD TO FIND IT IS.

THAT'S SO LAME...

WOW...

OH YEAH...

SO WHERE'S CIRNO?

SORRY FOR THE WAIT!

SO, WHAT'D YOU FIND?

YOU'RE LATE!

YOU'RE EMPTY-HANDED.

HUH?

HOW WERE YOU SUPPOSED TO CATCH ANYTHING?

WELL, WHAT'D WE EXPECT FROM AN ICE FAIRY WHO CAN'T ERASE SOUNDS, DISAPPEAR FROM SIGHT, OR SENSE CREATURES?

YOU CAN COME OUT NOW!

HMPH!

WHO NEEDS A POWER LIKE THAT TO CATCH A BUG?

IS THAT A CRAZY HUGE BUTTER-FLY?

WHOA!

THAT'S-

WAIT...

ISN'T IT *TOO* BIG?

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EVERY-ONE ENJOYING THE SUMMER?

HEY THERE!

THE MIDSUMMER SWALLOWTAIL BUTTERFLY FAIRY

ETERNITY LARVA

SHE'S RIGHT, THERE'S A LOOP-HOLE.

SO WHAT RULE AM I BREAKING?

BUTTER-FLIES ARE BUGS.

わ!! THAT'S A FAIRY!

A LOT'S HAPPENED LATELY, SO SHE KNOWS ALL SORTS OF SUMMER GAMES! LET'S PLAY WITH HER!

SHE'S A BUTTERFLY FAIRY WITH HER BASE IN THE SUNFLOWER FIELD.

NICE TO MEET YOU!

YOU'RE RIGHT!

I MEAN, LOOK AT THOSE WINGS.

WAIT, DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU ALL BUGS TOO?

SO YOU THREE LIVE AT THE *SHRINE*?

YUP!

ZZZZ

WOW...

パチ CRACKLE

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

BUT I HEAR THERE ARE LOTS OF YOUKAI MAKING IT UNCOMFORT-ABLE THERE...

IT'S NOT SO BAD.

SURE, YOU COULD GET CAUGHT BY A HUMAN OR YOUKAI, BUT JUST THINK OF THE PRANKS.

PLUS, WE CAN...

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WITH THOSE POWERS, YOU COULD LIVE ANYWHERE YOU WANT WITHOUT PEOPLE GETTING MAD AT YOU!

...WOW!

YOU CAN HIDE YOURSELVES, ERASE SOUNDS, AND SENSE PRESENCES?

THAT'D BE NICE...

AROUND HERE THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER RIVAL FAIRIES. IT'S, LIKE, OVERCROWDED.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER NICE PLACES TO LIVE...?

WHAT ABOUT THE LAKE? SHE LIVES THERE.

Z Z Z

NO WAY! THE LAKE OF DEATH?

IT NEVER GETS ANY DIRECT SUNLIGHT. IT'S LIKE NOTHING CAN LIVE THERE.

GOOD POINT.

ONLY SOMEONE WHO HATES HEAT LIKE CIRNO WOULD WANT TO-

WAIT, HUH?

CIRNO HATES THE HEAT, RIGHT?

Z Z Z

SO WHY'S SHE ENJOYING THE SUMMER SO MUCH?

YOU'RE RIGHT, THAT'S WEIRD.

I'VE NEVER SEEN HER GET SO TANNED BEFORE EITHER.

OH, RIGHT, I HEAR CIRNO GOT INTO SOME TROUBLE EARLIER. WITH YOUKAI.

SO THAT'S WHAT SHE TOLD ME.

I SEE.

SO CIRNO WENT AROUND CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO BE THE STRONGEST.

ON THE MOUNTAIN, AT THE SHRINE, EVEN IN A BLIZZARD.

SHE'D GO UP TO THE STRONGEST-LOOKING PERSON, FIGHT THEM, AND WIN.

AND THEN SHE ENDED UP IN SOME DARK PLACE, SO SHE COULDN'T REALLY TELL BUT SHE FOUGHT SOME DANCERS AND A REALLY ARROGANT LADY.

AS RECKLESS AS ALWAYS. SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT.

SO WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH HER BEING OKAY WITH THE HEAT?

ACCORDING TO HER, "NOTHING!"

BUT IT'S OBVIOUSLY CONNECTED.

BECAUSE CIRNO HERSELF TOLD ME THAT

"YOUR POWER IS OVERFLOWING BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT A DOOR ON YOUR BACK."

PLUS, THAT DARK SKIN OF HERS ISN'T A TAN.

IT'S SOMETHING WAY MORE MYSTERIOUS. AND SCARY.

IT WAS TOO DARK TO SEE INSIDE, BUT I KNOW CIRNO WAS BEING TAKEN HOLD OF BY THE MAGIC FLOWING OUT FROM IT.

I DON'T REALLY GET WHY, BUT ME AND CIRNO BOTH HAD DOORS ON OUR BACKS.

A DOOR ON YOUR BACK? WHAT?!

WAIT, BACK UP!

WAS THERE SOME KIND OF INCIDENT?

SO? HOW DID IT END?

HMM...

WHAT A WEIRD STORY.

BUT SHE'S RIGHT HE-

WHAT? SHE VANISHED?

JUST... POOF!

SO THEN,

CIRNO TOUCHED MY BACK AND VANISHED OFF TO SOME-WHERE.

...HUH?

NO ONE HAS A DOOR ON THEIR BACK THIS TIME...

WHERE COULD SHE HAVE GONE?

SHE VANISHED AGAIN?

BESIDES, IT'S TOO DARK TO GO LOOKING FOR HER.

LET'S JUST SLEEP HERE TONIGHT.

EH, SHE'LL BE FINE, RIGHT?

...

I'M SURE SHE'LL BE BACK.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

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GET! UP!

チュー

C'MON!

URNH...

I'M STILL PLAY-ING...

I SAID GET UP!

GYAH?!

WH-WHERE AM I?!

THE FIELD OF THE SUN.

DON'T YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY?

UM, UH...

WE PLAYED A LOT, AND THEN IT WAS NIGHT, AND THEN...

OH, RIGHT!

DID WE FIND CIRNO?!

WELL, YOU SEE,

WE TRIED ASKING THE SUNFLOWER FAIRIES, BUT THEY DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING.

WE WERE GOING TO TAKE A LOOK AROUND AFTER THIS.

MY RADAR IS SAYING SHE'S NOT HERE.

but, well, there are so many fairies that I can't say for sure

OKAY.

ALL RIGHT THEN!

THAT SETTLES TODAY'S GAME!

TIME TO HUNT FOR CIRNO!

HEY, IS IT ALWAYS LIKE THIS WITH YOU THREE?

PRETTY MUCH.

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING FUN GOING ON IN THE WORLD, SO WE'LL NEVER RUN OUT OF STUFF TO PLAY.

WELP, SEE YA LATER!

LOOKS LIKE FUN.

HMM...

IF SUCH CAREFREE FAIRIES LIVE THERE, MAYBE I SHOULD STOP BY SOMETIME.

THEY SAID THEY LIVED AT THE SHRINE?

STILL NO SIGN OF A DOOR ON MY BACK.

...

IT WAS SO EXCITING WHEN I WAS BURSTING WITH POWER.

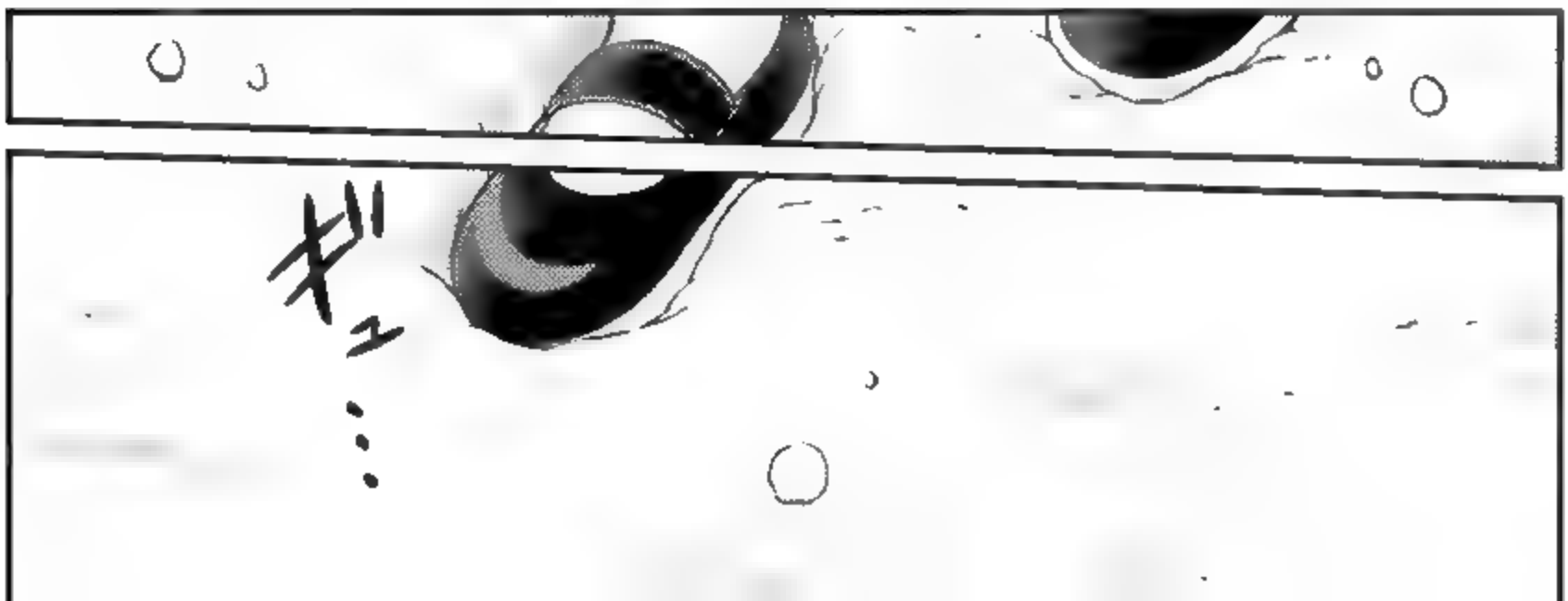
AW...

THAT'S TOO BAD.

THAT'S WHEN THEY REALIZED THAT NATURE IN GENSOYKO WAS BEHAVING EVEN MORE ODDLY THAN THEY HAD THOUGHT.

ON THE WAY, THEY FOUND PLACES WHERE IT WAS AUTUMN, OR SNOW WAS FALLING, AND OTHERS.

AFTERWARD, THE THREE FAIRIES WENT ALL OVER LOOKING FOR CIRNO.



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I CAN FEEL SOMETHING LIKE HER AROUND HERE...

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DON'T TELL ME SHE'LL JUST KEEP VANISHING..?

BUT WHY DID SHE SUDDENLY DISAPPEAR YESTERDAY?

LOOK OVER THERE!

HEY!

CIRNO!

HEY!

YOU OKAY?!

SHE'S NOT ANSWERING. SHE'S JUST...

OUTTA THE WAY.

UWAH!

WHAT THE HECK?!

WHAT WAS THAT?!

ARE YOU UP?

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN LAST NIGHT?

YOU SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED SO WE CAME LOOKING FOR YOU.

WATCH YOUR TONE.

WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!

AND I HAD FINALLY GOTTEN COMFORT-ABLE.

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OH, RIGHT, I REMEMBER NOW.

LAST NIGHT...

LUCKILY IT WAS SNOWING, SO I MADE A BED OUT OF SNOW TO COOL MY BODY AND WENT TO SLEEP.

SO I WENT LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO COOL OFF AND ENDED UP HERE.

IT WAS TOO HOT FOR ME TO GET TO SLEEP,

HUH?

I THOUGHT I CONQUERED MY WEAKNESS TO HEAT.

WAIT, THAT'S WEIRD.

HAVEN'T YOU LOST YOUR TAN?

YOUR BODY...

HUH?

N-NO! THERE'S NO WAY THAT'S TRUE! THAT WAS A REAL SUMMER TAN!

ガビーン!

ARE YOU SURE YOU WEREN'T JUST DIRTY THE WHOLE TIME? EW!

SO IT WASHED OFF WITH WATER...

YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M A PURE WHITE FAIRY AGAIN.

IN THE END, THE "FOUR SEASONS INCIDENT" WHICH DISRUPTED GENSOKYO'S WEATHER QUIETLY ARRIVED AT A RESOLUTION.

AND THEY ALL LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

THIS SIGNALLED THE END OF THE FAIRIES' RAMPAGE, WITH THEIR INFLUENCE OVER NATURE GRADUALLY WEAKENING AS WELL.

CIRNO HAD LOST HER TAN AT THE SAME TIME AS HER RESISTANCE TO HEAT.

◀3月号に続く

いったい誰の仕業…？

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